

EMN Annual Report on Migration and Asylum 2022

Sweden



EMN Annual Report on Migration and Asylum 2022 – Sweden

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SAMMANFATTNING

Denna rapport syftar till att beskriva den viktigaste utvecklingen inom migration och asyl under 2022 i Sverige. Den syftar även till att redogöra för relevanta nationella offentliga debatter under 2022 samt policyutvecklingen på Europeisk nivå och dess påverkan nationellt.

Övergripande trender

Utvecklingen i omvärlden 2022 ledde till en situation som Europa inte befunnit sig i sedan andra världskriget. När Ryssland i februari invaderade Ukraina sattes stora flyktingströmmar i rörelse och EU:s massflyktsdirektiv 2022/382 Temporary Protection Directive, (TPD), aktiverades. Aktiveringen av massflyktsdirektivet som har förlängts till den 4 mars 2024, har haft stor påverkan på migration och asyl i Sverige under 2022 och flera lag- och policyändringar har ägt rum. Aktiveringen av TPD har även haft stor påverkan Migrationsverket verksamhet under 2022. Migrationsverket har bland annat förstärkts med mer personal för att klara den ordinarie verksamheten och det utökade uppdrag som hanteringen av sökande enligt massflyktdirektivet medfört. Migrationsverket har dessutom på kort tid tagit fram e-tjänster och digitala lösningar för att hantera det stora inflödet av personer som ansökt om TPD och ett helt nytt system för boende har genomförts.

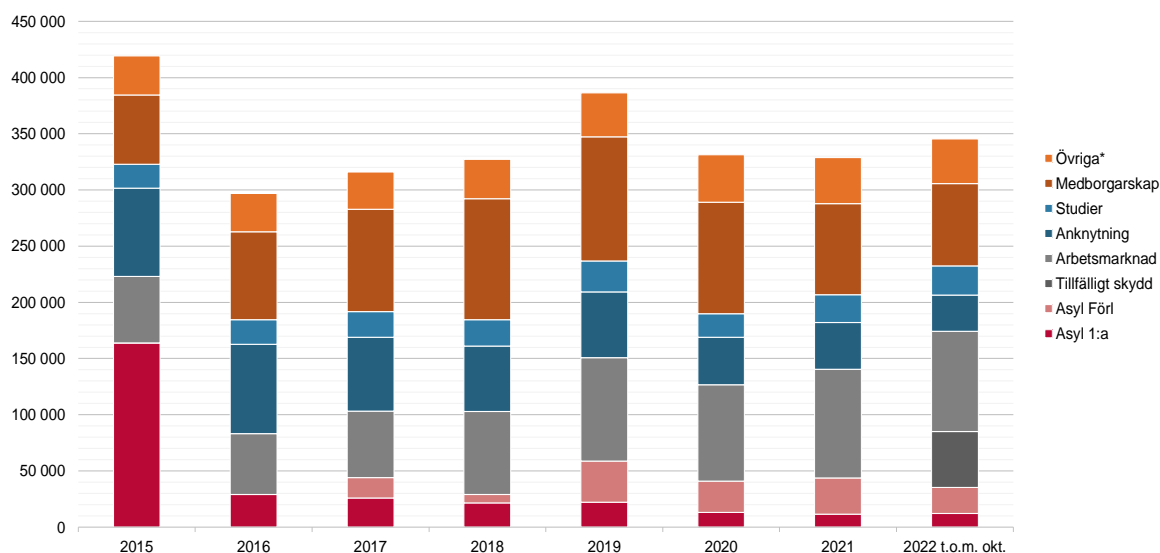
Som visas i figur 1 nedan ökade antalet nya asylsökande 2022. 2015 var antalet som högst för att sedan minska från 2016 fram till 2022 när antalet asylsökande ökade igen.

Familjerelaterad invandring ökade fram till 2017 och har sedan minskat fram till idag. För arbetsrelaterad invandring visade trenden en stark tillväxt 2017-2019, en nedgång under pandemiåren för att sedan öka igen 2021 och 2022. När det gäller internationella studenter är en långsamt ökande trend synlig fram till 2019; denna bromsades 2020 av Covid-19-pandemin för att sedan öka något igen 2021 och 2022.

Figur 1. Inkomna ansökningar mellan 2015-2022.

Inkomna ansökningar

2015-2022



MIGRATIONSVERKETS UPPDRAG OCH STATISTIK



Tabell 1 och figur 2 nedan (absoluta tal) visar huvudkategorierna för förstagångstillstånd som beviljades mellan 2020-2022. TPD samt förstagångstillstånd asyl utgjorde den största kategorin, detta med anledning av Ukraina. Personer som kom till Sverige som arbetstagare utgjorde den andra största kategorin bland förstagångstillstånd som beviljades. Denna kategori var störst under 2020 och 2021 till skillnad från tidigare år då asyl- och familjerelaterade tillstånd var större kategorier än arbetsrelaterade tillstånd.

Tillstånd för familjeåterförening, familjebildning och andra familjerelaterade syften utgjorde den tredje största kategorin.

Tabell 1: Antal beviljade uppehållstillstånd (förstagångstillstånd) 2020-2022

Grund för uppehållstillstånd	2020	2021	2022
Familjeskäl	29 511	24 189	20 990
Arbete*	32 382	39 270	38 399
Skydd och humanitära grunder**	10 471	11 443	56 622
Studier***	10 869	14 034	14 537
EU/EES-regler	5 776	5 653	7 883
Summa	89 009	94 589	142 179

Förklaringar:

* Inkluderar familjemedlemmar till arbetstagare.

** Inkluderar flyktingar enligt flyktingkonventionen, alternativt (subsidiärt) skydd, vidarebosättning och uppehållstillstånd beviljade på grund av synnerligen ömmande omständigheter eller verkställighetshinder. Siffrorna inkluderar även tillstånd inom ramen för den så kallade gymnasielagen samt TPD.

*** Inkluderar familjemedlemmar till internationella studenter.

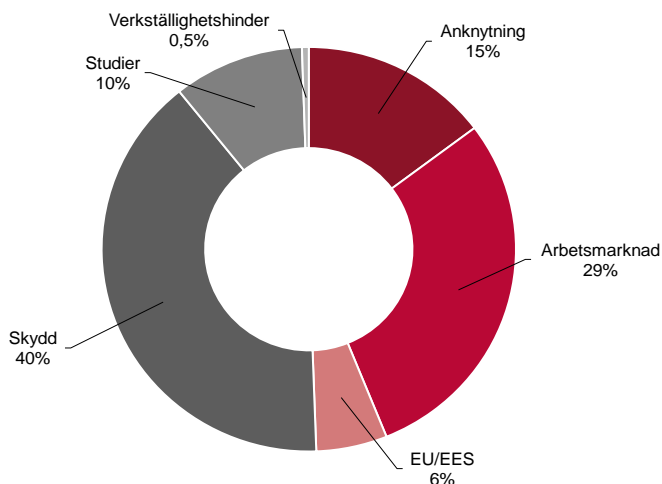
Källa: Migrationsverket.

Figur 2: Antal förstagångstillstånd beviljade 2022

Uppehållstillstånd

Beviljade uppehållstillstånd 2022 inklusive anhöriga

Ärendeslag	Antal
Anknytning	20 990
Arbetsmarknad	41 396
EU/EES	7 883
Skydd	56 622
Studier	14 537
Verkställighetshinder	751
Totalt	142 179



MIGRATIONSVERKETS UPPDRAG OCH STATISTIK



Källa: Migrationsverket.

Internationellt skydd

Antalet nya asylsökande var fler än under pandemiåren och vi ser en ökning från 11 412 under 2021 till att 16 734 personer sökte asyl 2022 (TPD ej medräknat). Den största gruppen som ansökte om asyl 2022 var från Afghanistan, andra viktiga ursprungsländer var Ukraina, Syrien, Irak, Uzbekistan Iran och Colombia. De länder som ökade mest under 2022 var Peru, Colombia, Ukraina, Ryssland och Uzbekistan.

Migrationsverket fattade 9 056 beslut i asylärenden (förstagångsärenden) 2022, något fler än 2021. Den totala beviljandeandelen var 37 %.

Antal sökande enligt massflyktsdirektivet till Sverige under 2022 var totalt 50 365. Totalt fattade Migrationsverket 47 566 beslut enligt massflyktsdirektivet. 8258 individer lämnade landet under 2022.

Vidarebosättning

Den svenska kvoten för vidarebosättning av flyktingar från tredjeländer var oförändrad 2022 och omfattade 5 000 personer. Under året överfördes 5004 kvotflyktingar. Antal beviljade uppehållstillstånd var 3 728. I samarbete med International Organisation for Migration (IOM) genomfördes informationsinsatser

för 2 992 kvotflyktingar, vilket innebar att 80 procent av dem som beviljades uppehållstillstånd tog del av insatserna.

Ensamkommande barn

Totalt sökte 623 ensamkommande barn om asyl i Sverige 2022. De flesta ensamkommande barn kom från Afghanistan (174), Syrien (154), Somalia (49), Marocko (42), Eritrea 28). 762 sökte enligt massflyktsdirektivet.

Sedan 2015 har antalet ensamkommande barn som ansökt om asyl i Sverige minskat kraftigt. År 2021 ansökte 507 ensamkommande barn om asyl, 2020 ansökte 492 ensamkommande barn om asyl jämfört med 902 år 2019.

Anhöriginvandring

Från 2018 har anhöriginvandringen minskat framförallt beroende på att antalet asylsökande har minskat. 29 511 beviljades 2020, 2021 beviljades 24 189 tillstånd och under 2022 beviljades 20 999 tillstånd.

Ytterligare 7 883 personer beviljades uppehållstillstånd enligt EU-regler om fri rörlighet för personer, till exempel tredjelandsmedborgare som hade status som varaktigt bosatta i någon annan medlemsstat eller tredjelandsmedborgare som var familjemedlemmar till en EU-medborgare som flyttat till Sverige.

Arbetskraftsinvandring

Antalet tredjelandsmedborgare som kom till Sverige för att arbeta såg en starkt ökande trend fram till 2019. 43 250 personer fick uppehållstillstånd för arbete i Sverige det året. 2020, under påverkan av pandemin, sjönk antalet kraftigt till 32 382. 2021 ökade antalet igen och 39 270 fick uppehållstillstånd för arbete.¹

Under 2022 beviljades 38 399 personer uppehållstillstånd- och arbetstillstånd som arbetstagare eller egen företagare (24 279) och deras anhöriga (14 120). De vanligaste yrkena var dataspecialister, medhjälpare till jordbruk (inklusive bärplockare) samt inom restaurangnäringen och idrottsutövare. Som tidigare består arbetskraftsinvandringen till Sverige av både högkvalificerade personer och arbetare i yrken med lägre eller inga formella behörighetskrav. Thailand (7050), Indien 5 046) och Turkiet (988) var de största grupperna.

Internationella studenter

Under 2022 beviljades 14 537 personer tillstånd för studier av något slag. Av dessa var 746 doktorander och 8333 gäststuderande på universitet och högskola. I siffran ingår anhöriga till gäststudenter (3779) och arbetssökande studenter (863). Antalet ansökningar var högre än förväntat och antalet studieavsiktsutredningar fördubblades. 863 personer fick uppehållstillstånd för att söka arbete efter studier

¹ Dessa siffror inkluderar medföljande anhöriga till arbetstagare.

i Sverige. 2021 beviljades 14 034 personer tillstånd för studier, 2020 med anledning av pandemin beviljades 10 869.

Medborgarskap

Under året ökade antalet ansökningar om svenskt medborgarskap och den nedåtgående trenden från senaste åren bröts. Under 2022 inkom 87 890 ärenden och 93 277 ärenden avgjordes. Totala bifallsandelen var 83 %. Fler ärenden avgjordes än året innan och antalet öppna ärenden minskade trots fler ansökningar än föregående år. Under en ganska lång period var Somalia den största gruppen men 2017 ersattes den av Syrien som även var den största gruppen 2022. Andra stora grupper var Eritrea, Somalia, Afghanistan och Irak.

Återvändandeärenden.

Under året lades fortsatt färre nya återvändandeärenden upp jämfört med föregående år framförallt med anledning av att färre personer sökte asyl, vilket minskade förutsättningarna för ett ökat antal återvändande. Under 2022 registrerades 11 260 återvändandeärenden jämfört med 2021 då 13 782 registrerades och 2020 då 18 523 ärenden registrerades. Antalet återvändandeärenden på grund av beslut om avvisning eller utvisning efter avslag på ansökan om asyl minskade betydligt. Medan antalet återvändandebeslut med omedelbar verkställighet till hemlandet ökade eftersom förteckningen över säkra ursprungsländer som infördes i maj 2021 var i kraft under hela 2022.

3 723 återvände självmant och till det land som anges i beslut om avvisning- eller utvisning. För samtliga frivilliga utresor under 2022 stod Irak följt av Uzbekistan, Albanien, Ryssland och Ukraina för de fem största medborgarskapen.

Övergripande policyutveckling

En ny regering tillträdde i Sverige den 18 oktober 2022. Regeringen består av Moderaterna, Kristendemokraterna och Liberalerna och regerar med stöd av Sverigedemokraterna. Sveriges statsminister är Ulf Kristersson, justitieministern är Gunnar Strömmer och migrationsministern är Maria Malmer Stenergard.

Grunderna för samarbetet finns i det så kallade Tidöavtalet som är en skriftlig överenskommelse mellan ovan nämnda partier. Några av huvudfrågorna i avtalet är migration och integration.

Gällande migration är inriktningen i avtalet att Sveriges lagstiftning för asylmottagande och anknytande regelverk och villkor ska anpassas för att inte vara mer generöst än vad som är en skyldighet för en medlemsstat enligt EU-rätten. Några av de planerade reformerna inom ramen för Tidöavtalet är bland annat tidsbegränsade uppehållstillstånd som en allmän regel, striktare regler gällande familjeåterförening, begränsad rätt till tolk-och transitcenter där den

asylsökande stannar under hela asylprocessen. Vidare vill regeringen införa striktare krav för medborgarskap, större möjligheter att återkalla ett uppehållstillstånd, större möjligheter att kunna utvisa gängkriminella som inte har ett svensk medborgarskap samt att återvändandeverksamheten ska intensifieras. Gällande integration lyfter Tidöavtalet bland annat fram att integrationspolitiken ska vara mer kravbaserad, en person som har stannat i Sverige under en längre period ska exempelvis själv ta ansvar för att bli en del av det svenska samhället.

SUMMARY

This report aims to outline most significant developments in 2022 in the area of migration and asylum in Sweden in the context of European policy development.

Overall trend

The development in the outside world in 2022 led to a situation that Europe has not been in since the Second World War. When Russia invaded Ukraine in February, the mass movements of Ukrainians started and the EU 2022/382 temporary protection directive (TPD) was activated. This situation had a great impact on migration and asylum in Sweden in 2022 and a number of new laws and policies were put in place. To manage the implementation of the TPD, which has been extended to 4 March 2024, the Swedish Migration Agency (SMA) needed to extend its capacity and strengthen the regular procedures to be able to process the applicants according to the TPD. The SMA has also, in a short period of time, launched digital solutions to handle the great inflow of applicants as well as activated a new system for accommodation.

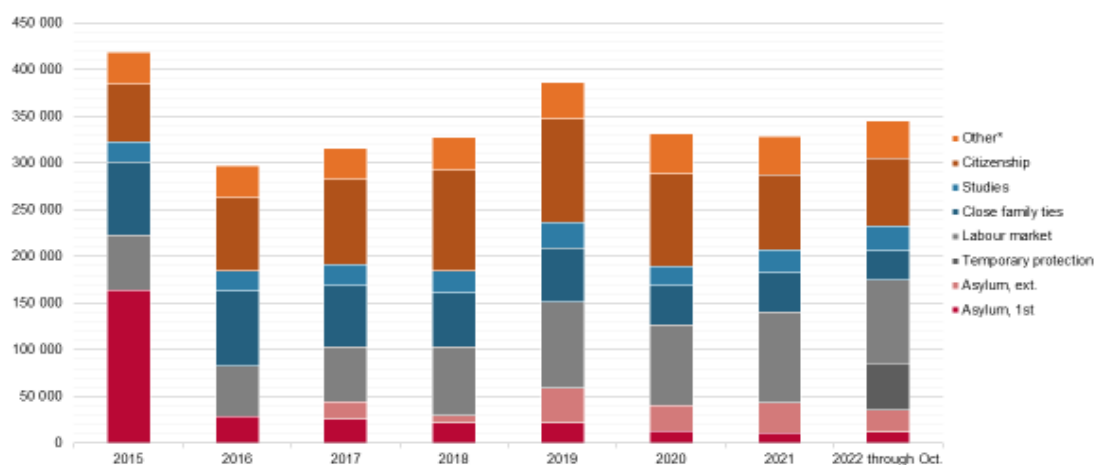
Figure 1 shows that more people applied for asylum in 2022 compared to the years during the Covid-19 pandemic. The development figure shows that people applying for asylum has decreased from 2016 and onwards to increase again in 2022.

As we have seen in previous years family-related immigration decreased in 2022. For work-related immigration, the trend shows a growth in 2022 compared to the years during the pandemic. As far as international students (immigration for education purposes) are concerned, a slowly increasing trend is visible in 2021 and 2022.

Figure 1. Received applicants 2015-2022.

Received applications

2015-2022



THE SWEDISH MIGRATION AGENCY'S MISSION AND STATISTICS

Migrationsverket

Table 1 and figure 2 below (absolute numbers) show the main categories of first-time residence permits that were granted in 2020-2022. In 2022 beneficiaries of international protection, i.e. individuals who received a residence permit for protection or humanitarian purposes after an asylum procedure or after resettlement to Sweden, were the largest category due to the war in Ukraine. Persons who came to Sweden for work purposes (labour migrants) were the second largest category among all first residence permits granted. In 2019-2020 that category was the largest.

Permits granted for family reunification, family formation and other family-related purposes represented the third largest broad category of immigrants in 2020.

Table 1: Overall immigration trend: First-time residence permits granted in 2020-2022

Reasons	2020	2021	2022
Family reasons	29 511	24 189	20 990
Work reasons*	32 382	39 270	38 399
Protection/humanitarian reasons**	10 471	11 443	51 622
Study reasons***	10 869	14 034	14 537
EU/EES-related permits	5 776	5 653	7 883
Total	89 009	94 589	142 179

Notes:

* Includes family members of labour immigrants.

** This includes protection for refugees, subsidiary protection, resettlement and residence permits granted due to exceptionally distressing circumstances or because a person could not be returned. Also includes residence permits granted under the "Upper secondary school Act" for young asylum seekers.

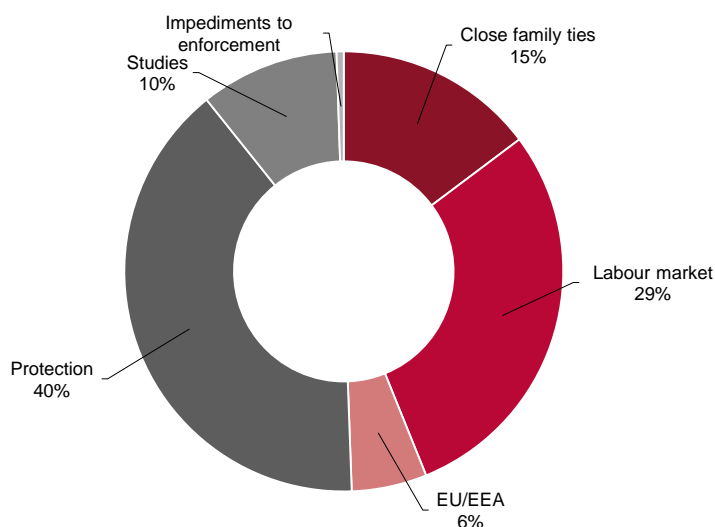
*** Includes family members of international students.

Source: Swedish Migration Agency.

Figure 2: Overall immigration: First-time residence permits granted 2022**Residence permits**

Residence permits granted in 2022, incl. close relatives

Type of case	Number
Close family ties	20 990
Labour market	41 396
EU/EEA	7 883
Protection	56 622
Studies	14 537
Impediments to enforcement	751
Total	142 179



THE SWEDISH MIGRATION AGENCY'S MISSION AND STATISTICS

**Source:** Swedish Migration Agency.***International protection***

The number of applicants for international protection increased compared to the pandemic years and there was an increase of asylum seekers compared to 2021. In 2021, 11 412 people applied for asylum in Sweden and in 2022, 16 734 applied for asylum (the numbers of TPD applicants not included). Most asylum seekers were from Afghanistan, other main countries were Ukraine, Syria, Iraq, Uzbekistan, Iran and Colombia. Countries that increased during 2022 were Peru, Colombia, Ukraine, Russia and Uzbekistan.

With regard to the outcome of asylum procedures the SMA made 9 056 first – instance international protection cases, slightly more than in 2021. The protection rate at the first instance was 37 %.

In total 50 365 applied according to TPD. 47 566 decisions were made under 2022 and 8258 people has left the country.

Resettlement and relocation

The Swedish quota for resettlement of refugees from third countries remained in 2022, comprising 5 000 persons. 5 004 were resettled during 2022. 3 728 persons were granted residence permit. In cooperation with International Organization for Migration (IOM) 2 992 civic information courses were carried out. 80 % had the opportunity to participate in those courses.

Unaccompanied minors

In 2022, 623 unaccompanied minors applied for asylum. Most of the minors came from Afghanistan (174), Syria (154), Somalia (49), Morocco (42), Eritrea (28). 762 unaccompanied minors registered for TPD.

Since 2015, the number of unaccompanied minors who applied for asylum in Sweden has declined. In 2021, 507 unaccompanied minors applied for asylum, in 2020, 492, compared to 2019 when 902 unaccompanied minors applied for asylum.

Immigration for family reasons

Since 2018, family-related permits have been decreasing due to the decreasing trend in applicants for internal protection. 29 511 were granted family-related permits in 2020, in 2021, 24 189 were granted family-related permits and in 2022 the number was 20 999.

Another 7 883 people were granted residence permits under EU rules regarding the free movement of persons, such as third-country nationals who had a long-term resident status issued by another Member State or third-country nationals who were family members of an EU citizen moving to Sweden.

Labour-related immigration

The number of immigrants coming to Sweden for employment purposes saw a strongly increasing trend until 2019. 43 250 individuals were granted a residence permit for work in Sweden that year. After that, under the impression of the pandemic, this number dropped sharply.

In 2022, 38 399 employees, self-employed people (24 279), and their close relatives (14 120) were granted residence permit for work in Sweden. Systems analysts, test managers, IT architects as well as berry pickers, planters, fast-food workers and food preparation assistants were the largest occupational groups among those who received a work permit in 2022. Like in previous years the labour immigration to Sweden consisted of both highly skilled people and workers in professions with no or lower formal qualification requirements. Thailand (7 050), India (5 046) and Turkey (988) were the most common nationalities.

International students

In 2022, 14 537 people moving to Sweden for study purposes were granted a first permit. The number of people moving to Sweden for study purposes decreased during the pandemic. In 2019, 10 869 people were granted a first permit and in 2021 the number was 14 034 persons.

Among those individuals that were granted a first permit in 2022 a majority were admitted as students at universities and university colleges (8333) and as doctoral

students (746). In this number you will also find relatives to students and job seeking students. 863 job seeking students was granted a first permit.

Citizenship

In 2022, the number of people applying for citizenship increased. 87 890 cases were registered and 93 277 cases for Swedish citizenship were decided cases. The number increased compared to the previous year. 83 % were granted a permit. More cases were concluded compare to 2021 and pending cases decreased even though more people applied for citizenship compare to 2021. The number of days to receive a decision regarding citizenship was 452 in 2022. For a long period, Somalia was the most common country. In 2017, Syria became the largest group and in 2022, Syria still remains the largest group. Other common nationalities were Eritrea, Somalia, Afghanistan and Iraq.

Return

Due to the decreased number of people applying for asylum the last couple of years, fewer return cases were registered in 2022 compared to last year. This affected the conditions to increase the amount of people returning. In 2022, 11 260 return cases were registered compare to 13 782 in 2021 and in 2020 when 18 523 cases were registered.

In 2022, 3 723 left the country according to decision and to the country specified in the decision. Of all voluntary returns during 2022 Iraq, Uzbekistan, Albania, Russia and Ukraine were the most common countries.

The number of return cases who received a decision to refuse entry or expulsion order also decreased. However, return cases registered according to a decision of refusal of entry with immediate effect increased due to the list of safe countries of origin that entered into force in May 2021 and was applicable during the whole year of 2022.

Overarching policy developments

A new government took office in 18 October 2022. The government consists of the Moderate Party, the Christian Democrats and the Liberal Party with support of the Sweden Democrats. The basis of the cooperation is the so called Tidö agreement which is a written agreement between the above parties. Some of the key policy areas are migration and integration.

When it comes to migration, the orientation of the government is to adjust the Swedish migration legislation to the minimum level according to the EU law. Some of the planned reforms within the framework of the agreement are as follows. Time-limited permits as a general rule, stricter conditions for family reunification, limit the right to a publicly funded interpreter, transit centres where the applicant stays throughout the asylum procedure, stricter requirements for Swedish

citizenship, increased opportunities to withdraw residence permits, deportation of gang criminals who do not have Swedish citizenship and further incentives for voluntary returns. When it comes to integration, the intention is that integration policy, to a greater degree, will be requirement-based. A person who stays in Sweden for a long-term shall for example be responsible for being a part of the Swedish society.

1 INTRODUCTION

In accordance with Article 9(1) of Council Decision 2008/381/EC establishing the EMN, each National Contact Point of the network is required to provide every year a report describing the migration and asylum situation in the respective Member State. The report is structured so as to present relevant information on each aspect or dimension of migration and asylum.

As during the past five years, the EMN Annual Report on Migration and Asylum for 2022 consists of two parts and a statistical annex. Part I was designed as a questionnaire and is primarily intended to inform policy-makers within the European Commission about national developments that are relevant to them when analysing and evaluating the impact of EU legislation and policies. The Swedish contribution to Part I was completed in February 2023 and sent to the Commission. Due to its rather technical nature and limited use for the general public, it remains unpublished but is available from the Swedish EMN NCP upon request.² The same is accurate for the statistical annex, which was sent to the Commission in March 2023.

This report represents Part II of the Swedish EMN Annual Report on Migration and Asylum for 2022. It is primarily intended for audiences that are interested in an overview of the asylum and immigration situation in Sweden and specific national audiences, such as policy-makers, researchers, the media and the general public. It is published on the national website of EMN Sweden.³

Section 1 introduces the report. Section 2 provides an overview of asylum and migration policy developments, to set a general context for the developments to be described in more detail further below. It includes an overview of the general political developments, as well as main policy and legislative debates, broader developments in asylum and migration, plus institutional developments. Sections 3-10 describe specific developments in the main areas of asylum and migration. Some sections are sub-divided into more specific, thematic sub-sections.

The Report covers the period 1 January to 31 December 2022. However, at some instance, it may also include references to developments that started in earlier years and continued in 2022 or early 2023. It is the 19th report in a series of such EMN annual reports.

² Please contact emn@migrationsverket.se

³ <https://www.emnsweden.se>

2 OVERVIEW OF ASYLUM AND MIGRATION POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

2.1 Organisational structure of asylum and migration policy

In Sweden, the Government sets out the general guidelines for migration policy by proposing bills. It is the responsibility of the Swedish Parliament to pass or reject proposed bills and amendments. The Government can supplement laws with ordinances. The Ministry of Justice is the Government body responsible for migration policy. It is also responsible for certain aspects of integration policies, which are shared between several other ministries but mainly lie within the responsibilities of the Ministry of Employment.

The Swedish Migration Agency and the Swedish Police Authority report to the Ministry of Justice and there is considerable cooperation at various levels between the ministry and these authorities. However, the authorities are formally subordinated to the Government as a whole and not a specific Ministry.⁴

Within the area of migration and asylum, the Swedish Migration Agency is the responsible administrative agency concerning primarily residence permits, work permits, visas, the reception of asylum seekers, return, acquisition of citizenship, repatriation and detention centres. Also active in the area of migration are the Migration Courts, the Migration Court of Appeal, the Police Authority, the Swedish Prison and Probation Service, the Swedish missions abroad and the Public Employment Service. In addition, the County Administrative Boards negotiate with the municipalities on the reception of individuals who have been granted protection.

Legal provisions pertaining to the tasks of the Swedish Migration Agency are found primarily in the Aliens Act, the Aliens Ordinance and the Ordinance with Instructions for the Swedish Migration Agency. The Government also manages the Agency by means of annual budget appropriation directives that specify the operational budget and objectives.

The Migration Agency has the main responsibility for the reception of asylum seekers, from the date on which an application for asylum has been submitted until the person has been received by a municipality after being granted a residence permit, or has left the country, if notified that the application has been rejected. The integration of recognised refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection is a responsibility of the 290 Swedish municipalities and the Public Employment Service.

⁴ The Swedish system is based on independent administrative authorities. No public authority or minister may determine how an administrative authority is to decide in a particular case involving the exercise of public authority vis-à-vis a private subject or a local authority, or the application of law.

While the Swedish Migration Agency has the responsibility for voluntary returns, the Police Authority is the main responsible authority for border control and forced return. The Customs and the Coast Guard are required to assist the Police in the control of third country nationals' entry and exit and the Coast Guard shall control the vessel traffic at sea borders.

The legal system pertaining to migration in Sweden is governed by the Aliens Act (*Utlänningslagen*, Statute 2005:716), and emanating from that law, the Aliens' Ordinance (*Utlänningsförrordningen*, Statute 2006:97). The current Aliens Act took effect on 31 March 2006 and has subsequently been amended many times. The Administrative Court Procedure Act (Statute 1971:291) governs with regard to appeals. The Administrative Procedure Act (Statute 2017:900) contains certain general statutes that govern all administrative agencies. Since July 2016, a temporary act restricting the possibility of being granted a residence permit in Sweden, and the right to family reunification, has been in force. It was scheduled to expire in 2019, but in June 2019, the Parliament voted to extend it until July 2021, with some changes related to family reunification. The temporary act was made permanent in 2021.

The Swedish migration system and asylum procedures are also regulated by the Act on Reception of Asylum Seekers (Statute 1994:137) and the Ordinance on Reception of Asylum Seekers (Statute 1994:361).

Border control is governed by the Regulation (EC) No 2016/399 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2016 on a Union code on the rules governing the movement of persons across borders (Schengen Borders Code).

2.2 General political and institutional developments

Since a new government took office in 18 October 2022, Sweden has been governed by the Moderate Party, the Christian Democrats and the Liberal Party with support of the Sweden Democrats. The Swedish Prime Minister is Ulf Kristersson, the Minister for Justice is Gunnar Strömmer and the Minister for Migration is Maria Malmer Stenergard.

The basis of the cooperation is the so called Tidö agreement which is a written agreement between the above parties. Some of the key policy areas are migration and integration. The orientation in the agreement is to adjust the Swedish migration law to a minimum level in accordance with international obligations. The intention, when it comes to integration is that the integration policy, to a greater degree, will be requirement-based. A person who stays in Sweden for a long-term shall be responsible for being a part of the Swedish society.

Some of the planned reforms within the framework of the agreement are as follows.

It is proposed to introduce government accommodation where asylum seekers are to spend the entire waiting time in the asylum procedure. Today asylum seekers choose and arrange their own accommodation. An ongoing inquiry will be given new instructions to analyse and develop proposals on this.

The Government announced in October 2022 its intention to abolish the concept of permanent residence permits and to introduce temporary residence permits as a general rule. Further, they intend to limit the right to a publicly funded interpreter, increased opportunities to withdraw residence permits, deportation of gang criminals who do not have Swedish citizenship and further incentives for voluntary returns will be taken.

The agreement also states that a review will be done of the existing regulations on safe countries of origin to allow for countries where parts of the country can be considered safe to be brought up on the list. They also consider shifting responsibility for the list of safe countries from the Swedish Migration Agency to Government Offices. The Government has initiated an information campaign about the so called 'paradigm shift' in migration policies, with information provided to Swedish foreign missions and targeted communication to foreign news agencies.

A new governmental inquiry will examine and propose how residence permits may be withdrawn to a greater extent and the Migration Agency shall give priority to cases regarding withdrawal of residence permit.⁵

A new inquiry shall propose additional conditions to qualify for Swedish citizenship, such as longer period of residence in Sweden and increased maintenance-requirements. The agreement also expresses that further restrictions and conditions for family reunification shall be assessed by an inquiry.

One of the first steps that the new government took was on 27 October 2022, when the Swedish Migration Agency was tasked to plan for a reduced number of refugees to be resettled from 5 000 per year to 900 in 2023 and 2024.⁶

2.3 Main policy and legislative debates

Broader policy changes which affected multiple themes and topics within asylum and migration.

In 2022, twenty-eight percent of the public in Sweden believed integration and migration to be the most important topic and in the public media migration and integration where the most reported subjects after law and order, energy and foreign policy. When it comes to law and order most focus has been on integration and gang criminality.

⁵ Tidöavtalet (The Tidö Agreement), <https://bit.ly/3wuCh0t>

⁶ [Sveriges nya migrationspolitik - Regeringen.se](https://www.regeringen.se/491119/1/2022-10-27)

The attention in the media increased in 2022 compared to the latest three years. Much of the public debate on migration and asylum in Sweden in 2022 centred on the new government and the effects its policies will have on migration and integration. However, the war in Ukraine and the large movements of Ukrainians citizens was also a big theme during the year. One of the main topics regarding Ukraine was accommodation. Whether or not asylum seekers should be allowed to arrange their own accommodation and stay with family members or friends has often been debated in Sweden. The debate when it comes to accommodation for Ukrainians was overall positive since the municipalities were positive to welcome them and arrange accommodation. Another issue concerned Ukrainians right to Swedish tuition for immigrants (SFI). People with temporary protection only have the opportunity to participate in the language course "Swedish from day one" organized by study associations and folk high schools and not to SFI.

Other important themes when it comes to the public debate have been Afghan women and Russians citizens who apply for asylum after Russia invaded Ukraine. When it comes to Afghan women the freedom of movement and other rights were significantly restricted in Afghanistan as a result of the Taliban taking power in Afghanistan. Due to that, the Migration Agency published, in December 2022 a new legal guidance on Afghanistan, in which it assessed that the situation for women and girls in Afghanistan was so severe that they should be regarded as refugees in general.⁷

During several years one of the debates and criticism against SMA has been the back-log of pending asylum cases. However, in 2022 since the back-log of pending asylum cases decreased, the focus on the debate turned to work-related immigration concerning exploitation of workers and how Sweden should handle that and on the back-log of pending cases in citizenship procedures.

The debate was also centred on how Sweden will handle the EU Presidency during 2023.⁸

2.4 Swedish Presidency of the Council of the European Union

Sweden holds the Presidency of the Council of the European Union during the first half of 2023.

The four priorities of the Swedish Presidency are;

Security – unity. The Swedish Presidency will prioritise continued economic and military support for Ukraine, as well as support for Ukraine's path towards the EU.

Resilience – competitiveness. The government states that the most urgent political attention is devoted to the war in Ukraine and its short-term consequences. Focus

⁷ SMA, Legal position RS/089/2021, Prövning av skyddsbehov m.m. för medborgare från Afghanistan, last updated 24 January 2023, available in Swedish at: <http://bit.ly/3zaBcw6>

⁸ Migrationsverket, kommunikationsavdelningen

during the Presidency will also be on efforts to drive economic growth to meet long-term challenges.

Prosperity – green and energy transition. The Swedish Presidency will continue efforts to tackle high and volatile energy prices while addressing long-term energy market reform.

Democratic values and the rule of law. Upholding the principle of the rule of law and fundamental rights is an essential element and will be the focus for Sweden's presidency of the Council.

The Common Foreign and Security Policy will also be high on EU agenda during the Swedish Presidency. Combating crime, terrorism and violent extremism is priority to ensure the safety of EU citizens.

When it comes to migration, the Presidency intends to advance the negotiations on a Pact on Migration and Asylum in accordance with the agreement between the institutions to conclude negotiations during the current parliamentary term. The Presidency also intends to work to ensure more operational, effective and coordinated cooperation with third countries and effective implementation of migration-related actions within the framework of the EU's external action. This will be done by, for instance, following up on the EU's work with priority third countries and current political issues. Returns are a central part of this. The Presidency will also have to deal with the migration consequences of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. In light of this invasion and the increased risk of natural disasters induced by a changing climate, the Presidency will also support EU civil protection cooperation.⁹

The Pact on Migration and Asylum

The government states that the EU needs an effective migration and asylum system. Achieving this requires action within the EU, and also outside its borders in cooperation with third countries. In 2016, the European Commission proposed a package of migration and asylum laws that the Member States were unable to agree on. In September 2020, the European Commission presented a proposal for a New Pact on Migration and Asylum.

Negotiations on the various parts of the New Pact on Migration and Asylum are ongoing in both the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament. The Swedish Presidency will continue to advance the negotiations. The Council, the Commission, and the Parliament have a common goal of ensuring that all parts of the Pact are agreed on before the next European Parliament elections in June 2024.

If necessary, the Swedish Presidency will also deal with any issues related to the Temporary Protection Directive.¹⁰

⁹ [Sveriges EU-ordförandeskap 2023 - Regeringen.se](https://www.regeringen.se/491010/1/2023-01-17-sveriges-eu-ordforandeskap-2023)

¹⁰ [Sveriges EU-ordförandeskap 2023 - Regeringen.se](https://www.regeringen.se/491010/1/2023-01-17-sveriges-eu-ordforandeskap-2023)

Proposals of new Schengen rules

In 2017, the European Commission proposed amending the regulatory framework on Schengen (the Schengen Borders Code). One matter the Commission wanted to address was to clarify the rules on how long temporary border controls may remain in place. However, the European Parliament and the Council were not able to reach agreement on the Commission's proposal.

The European Commission therefore presented a new proposal in December 2021. Among other things The Commission proposes several measures that Member States can take to prevent a state from instrumentalising migrants – i.e. using them as a means of exerting pressure on an individual Member State or on the EU as a whole. This includes clarifying when and how a Schengen country may limit the number of border crossings and conduct increased border surveillance.

During the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first half of 2022, the Council adopted a common position on the European Commission's proposal for a new Code. The Council is now awaiting the position of the European Parliament. The Parliament is expected to hold a vote in the first half of 2023.

As soon as the European Parliament has reached agreement on its position, the Swedish Presidency will press for negotiations with the European Parliament to begin as soon as possible.

The European Commission has also presented a proposal on the digitalisation of the visa procedure and the introduction of digital visas. Negotiations on the proposal will continue during the Swedish Presidency. Sweden will also initiate a broader discussion on the future of visa policy and a possible review of the mechanism that allows the temporary suspension of visa-free travel.¹¹

Reducing the pressure of irregular migration and ensuring effective return.

The Swedish Presidency intends to follow up the difficulties in returning third country nationals who are not entitled to stay in the EU through the Presidency at all levels with the council.

Current return rates negatively affect the reception capacity, as well as the legitimacy of the national asylum and migration systems and there is strong support among Member States for making full use of the Article 25a mechanism, including the possibility of introducing restrictive visa measures in relation to third countries that do not cooperate on returns.¹²

¹¹ [Sveriges EU-ordförandeskap 2023 - Regeringen.se](https://www.regeringen.se/491090)

¹² [Sveriges EU-ordförandeskap 2023 - Regeringen.se](https://www.regeringen.se/491090)

Prevention models to address the demand that fosters trafficking for sexual purpose.

Trafficking in human beings is linked to and exacerbated by poverty, inequality, discrimination, armed conflict and migration. The exploitation is often committed within the framework of, or is closely linked to, organised crime. Independent of national legislation, all EU and UN Member states have an obligation to address the demand that fosters trafficking in human beings.

During the Swedish Presidency there will be a conference to focus on among other things ensuring prevention and protection of victims of sexual exploitation and trafficking for sexual purposes and acknowledging the need to enhance joint efforts and promote mobilisation to end this serious crime and exploitation.¹³

2.5 Overarching changes related to the activation of the Temporary Protection Directive.

The outbreak of the war in Ukraine led to several policy and legislative changes during 2022 as well as several developments in relation to operational aspects. The SMA has also, in a short period of time, launched digital solutions to handle the great inflow of applicants as well as activated a new system for accommodation. There has also been a need for humanitarian action through civil society organisations. Main changes concerning policy and legislative changes related to the activation of the TPD during 2022 is described in chapter 3.

¹³ [Sveriges EU-ordförandeskap 2023 - Regeringen.se](https://www.regeringen.se/491090/1/2022-09-27)

3 RESPONSES TO THE INFLUX OF PERSONS FLEEING THE WAR IN UKRAINE.

In total approximately 52 000 persons applied according to the TPD in 2022 in Sweden, 47 566 where granted a residence permit and 8 258 left the country.

The Temporary Protection Directive was implemented in the Swedish Aliens Act on 1 January 2003. In 2006, the Aliens Act underwent substantial changes, and the relevant provisions for temporary protection were moved to a separate chapter. Chapter 21 of the Aliens Act refers to the TPD stating that temporary protection according to the Directive is regulated in that chapter. Sweden is applying temporary protection exclusively under the Directive. This legal provision sets out who is entitled to a residence permit for temporary protection and for how long. Procedural aspects are not set out in the Aliens Act. However, the Swedish Migration Agency has issued legal guidelines regarding temporary protection for people from Ukraine. It has also issued internal guidelines on how applications for residence permits for temporary protection should be examined.

The Swedish Migration Agency issued a legal guideline stating that people who fall under the directive and the implementing decision of 4 March 2022 (EU 2022/382) will be granted a residence permit valid for one year from that date, i.e. until 4 March 2023. On 28 December 2022, a legal position paper was adopted by the Swedish Migration Agency on the Temporary Protection Directive.¹⁴ Residence and work permits granted according to Directive 2001/55/EC must be valid until 4 March 2024.

To cover those who left Ukraine prior to the invasion on 24 February 2022 due to the increased tensions and Russia´s military mobilisation a new article was added in the Swedish Aliens Ordinance to include those who left Ukraine prior the invasion to the provisions of temporary protection in Sweden. This applies to those who travelled to and stayed in Sweden between 30 October 2021 and 23 February 2022.¹⁵

A person in need of protection, who does not fulfil the requirements for a permit in accordance with the TPD, can apply for asylum. Due to the altered security situation in the country, for now no refusal of entry or deportation decisions will be enforced with regard to people from Ukraine. If the applicant have received a refusal of entry or deportation decision, they are allowed to remain in Sweden as long as the suspension of enforcement remains in place. This applies regardless of whether the applicant has applied for asylum, a work permit, or some other type of permit.

People who have applied for asylum and are recognized as refugees or beneficiaries of subsidiary protection in Sweden are issued temporary residence permits (for three years or 13 months, respectively). However, the protection statuses on

¹⁴ [Dokument - Lifos extern \(migrationsverket.se\)](#)

¹⁵ [Anmälan av föreskrifter om att ytterligare kategorier av fördrivna personer ska ges tillfälligt skydd - Regeringen.se](#)

which such residence permits are based are not temporary. Thus, these types of protection are not considered forms of temporary protection.

A new article in the Act on Reception of Asylum Seekers stipulates that persons applying for temporary protection in Sweden is included to the group of people covered by the act, and not only persons who have been granted residence permit due to temporary protection. Among other things, this means that the benefits of housing and allowance can be accessible from the time of application.

3.1 Labour market for beneficiaries of temporary protection

The Swedish Migration Agency is responsible to register the beneficiaries of temporary protection and to issue residence permits to them. A work permit is also issued, which means that beneficiaries of temporary protection, who are above the age of 16, have the right to work once they have received the decision on protection. The possibility to work can be accessible from the time of application. They can also register at the Swedish Public Employment Service to get access to certain jobs with support.

On 2 June 2022, the Ministry of Employment announced that there will be increased opportunities for Ukrainians to find employment in Sweden. The Swedish government tasked the Public Employment Service to provide beneficiaries of temporary protection information about the Swedish labour market, occupations and sectors where there are vacancies, and how to apply for jobs. The Swedish Public Employment Service has translated information on its website about working in Sweden into Ukrainian.¹⁶

To make it easier and faster for those who have temporary protection to enter the labour market the government introduced changes in the Aliens Ordinance and in the ordinance for the population register. This gave the Swedish Migration Agency the task of asking the Swedish Tax Agency to grant a coordination number to a person with temporary protection and who has provided the SMA with proof of his or her identity. A coordination number confirms the identity of people who need to interact with the Swedish public authorities, or other parts of Swedish society.

The initiative to facilitate the provision of education and training for Ukrainians is financed by the European Social Fund through the EU Commission's Cohesion's Action for Refugees in Europe (CARE). The aim is for the target group to get into work and become socially included. The efforts will possibly include a total of 88 million euros.

¹⁶ [Ukrainares kompetens ska kartläggas - Regeringen.se](https://www.regeringen.se/pressmeddelanden/2022/06/ukrainares-kompetens-ska-kartlaggas)

3.2 Access to basic services for beneficiaries of temporary protection

Access to suitable accommodation

The Migration Agency is responsible for providing accommodation at one of the Agency's housing facilities, if needed. Beneficiaries may choose to arrange their own accommodation, for example with relatives or friends. Those beneficiaries who request the Agency's help regarding accommodation cannot choose where within Sweden they will be accommodated. They are offered free housing, if needed/requested. But they are not entitled to housing allowance.

There are several forms of accommodation options simultaneously. Sweden has established new reception centres for beneficiaries of temporary protection. They are also living in temporary housing offered by private households. Sweden also make use of existing reception centres intended for applicants or beneficiaries of international protection.

Civil society and non-governmental organizations coordinate (private) accommodation initiatives, sometimes with the support (at least financial) of public institutions. The authorities are referring to NGOs but are not coordinating their work. The work is coordinated by NGOs.

To facilitate for the SMA to arrange temporary housing and to be better prepared for an increased influx of asylum seekers the Government assigned the County Administrative boards to make an inventory of existing premises, and other simpler forms of housing that can be used as temporary housing for people in need of protection. The remit was carried out in dialogue with municipalities, regions, and other relevant actors. The inventory was finished in March/April of 2022 and identified about 74,000 housing places, both short-term evacuation sites and more long-term forms of accommodation.

The Government assigned the Swedish Migration Agency to construct and manage temporary accommodation based on the Swedish Migration Agency's assessments of the demand. In the planning process, certain considerations should be made such as, access to schools, municipal service, and public transportation.

To facilitate the arrangement of housing, create an equal distribution of people fleeing from Ukraine through Sweden and in order to promote sharing between municipalities and avoid risk for increased segregation on 1 July 2022 a new law was introduced requiring municipalities to take over the responsibility of arranging housing for people with the protection under the Temporary Protection Directive. The aim of the new law is for Sweden's municipalities to share the responsibility of arranging housing, schooling and care for people who has fled the war in Ukraine. The Swedish Migration Agency are responsible for allocating those who have received protection to the municipalities, based on a distribution key. The distribution key is based on local labour market conditions, population size and the

overall number of newly arrived immigrants, unaccompanied minors and asylum seekers already living in the municipality.¹⁷

The Government has implemented changes to the Planning and Building Act, such as certain exceptions from building permit provisions otherwise required when establishing accommodation for people from Ukraine seeking protection in Sweden under the Temporary Protection Directive. The changes to the law are applied retroactively and applicable to measures initiated before the changes come into force, yet at the earliest by March 15, 2022.

These exceptions from certain provisions in the law will support the Swedish Migration Agency's possibilities to establish temporary accommodation in extraordinary situations, such as sports halls, barracks, or tents. They will also mitigate the municipalities' obligations when establishing housing facilities on arrival.

Access to suitable accommodation for unaccompanied minors

Beneficiaries who are unaccompanied minors are assigned to a municipality and that municipality is responsible for arranging accommodation for them.

Housing for unaccompanied minors involves the mobilization of the child protection departments and other relevant social services in the respective Member State, to decide on the best housing option, taking into account the best interest of the child.

Options available include foster placements, safe houses and specialized centers for minors, as well as accommodation with family or friends of the family living in the Member State.

3. 3 Access to assistance in terms of social welfare and means of subsidies

The Swedish Migration Agency was assigned by the Government to provide information to all asylum seekers starting from 1 October 2021. This so called community introduction programme entails highlighting important issues related to democracy, rights, obligations and opportunities in society. From January 2022, there are five cities in Sweden offering the programme, Malmö, Göteborg, Norrköping, Sundbyberg and Boden.

In April 2022, the assignment to the Swedish Migration Agency to offer civic information for asylum seekers was extended to also include beneficiaries of temporary protection from Ukraine. The online course for beneficiaries of temporary protection is available in Ukrainian, English and Russian and offered from September 2022. The website [informationsverige.se](https://www.informationsverige.se) (Information Sweden)

¹⁷ [Åtgärder för en jämnare fördelning av boende för vissa skyddsbehövande - Regeringen.se](https://www.regeringen.se/491010/1/20220315)

with information to anyone who is new in the country has during 2022 been translated to Ukrainian and Russian.

Beneficiaries receive the same allowances as applicants for international protection. They are not entitled to other allowances or social security benefits. The allowances are provided by the Swedish Migration Agency. Beneficiaries who are unaccompanied minors receive assistance from the municipality to which they have been assigned.

Access to education for minors.

The Swedish National Agency for Education offers support to schools and school providers that are responsible for the reception of newly arrived pupils. This includes for example guidelines for assessment of newly arrived children's knowledge and provision of mother tongue tuition.

3. 4 Integration

To improve the integration of new arrivals civil society has in 2022 received SEK 100 million for humanitarian efforts.

The invasion of Ukraine has meant that a large number of people are seeking refuge in Sweden. This has led to the need for humanitarian action through civil society organisations, for example in the form of coordination of and support for various types of voluntary efforts in the reception of people in need of protection.

People with temporary protection have the opportunity to participate in the language course "Swedish from day one" organized by study associations and folk high schools. The course is available at various locations in Sweden as well as online and is free of charge for the participants.

Municipalities and municipalities working together with civil society also received an additional SEK 30 million to support local integration efforts and language initiatives.

Integration unaccompanied minors

In the beginning of April 2022, the Ombudsman for children in Sweden was tasked with an assignment to, due to the invasion of Ukraine, conduct an ongoing dialogue with relevant actors within civil society. The purpose of the assignment was to exchange knowledge about the current situation for children and young people and to reach out with accurate and child-friendly information about what rights children have in different parts of the Swedish society.

The Ombudsman for children should also offer support both to actors within civil society and to relevant authorities, municipalities and regions, to make information

and knowledge accessible and adapted to children. It could be information for children who feel worried about the current situation and information about what applies upon arrival in Sweden. The support should be based on the rights of the child, CRC, and children's opinions and experiences should be taken into account.

4 LEGAL MIGRATION

4.1 Work-related migration

The number of immigrants coming to Sweden for employment purposes saw a strongly increasing trend until 2019. 43 250 individuals were granted a residence permit for work in Sweden that year. In 2020, under the impression of the pandemic, this number dropped sharply to 32 382. In 2021 the number increased again to 39 270. In 2022, 38 399 individuals, employees, self-employed people and their close relatives were granted residence permit for work in Sweden.

Table 2 shows the ten main occupational categories among incoming workers from third countries in 2022. These figures are based on the number of work permits granted. There are certain differences between the number of immigrants who received a residence permit for work reasons as employees and the number of work permits issued during the same year. The main reason for this is that in some cases, an immigrant will need a work permit to work in Sweden, but not a residence permit, while in other cases, a residence permit is needed, but the person is exempted from the requirement to have a work permit.

As table 2 shows, systems analysts, test managers, IT architects as well as berry pickers and planters were the largest occupational groups among those who received a work permit in 2022. Like previous years the labour immigration to Sweden consists of both highly skilled people and workers in professions with no or lower formal qualification requirements.

Table 2: Work permits granted in 2022, 10 main occupational groups

	2022
Berry pickers and planters	6 534
IT architects, systems analysts, and test managers	5 006
Physical and engineering science technicians	1 694
Engineering professionals	1 693
Fast-food workers, food preparation assistants	927
Cleaners and home service personnel	696
Cooks and cold-buffet managers	572
Loggers	518
Operational support and network technicians	441
Market gardeners and crop growers	437
<i>Others</i>	5599
Total	24 279

Source: Swedish Migration Agency.

Table 3 shows the overall development regarding labour immigration to Sweden for the five-year period 2018-2022. The number of incoming employees increased

until 2019 and then decreased significantly in 2020. To increase again in 2021 and 2022. Immigration for self-employment purposes has been very modest in size over many years.

Table 3: Labour immigration to Sweden, 2018-2022

Broad category	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Employees	21 490	22 944	16 315	21 807	24 199
Family members of labour immigrants	15 373	15 131	12 510	14 164	14 120
Self-employed	135	104	114	221	160
Visiting researchers	1 155	1 216	905	1 173	1 121
Work in Sweden under special rules	2 897	3 855	2 538	1 988	1 881
Total	41 050	43 250	32 382	36 109	38 399

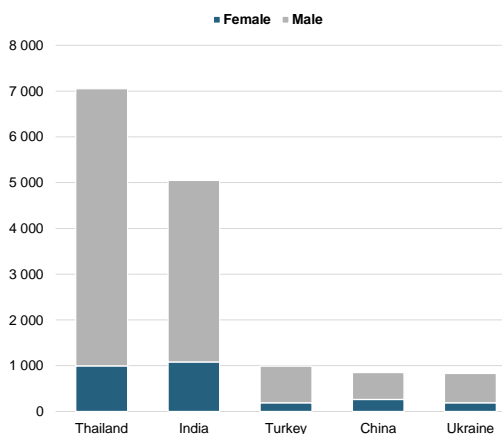
Source: Swedish Migration Agency.

Figure 4: Residence permits granted for work purposes (including family members). Thailand (7 050), India (5 046) and Turkey (988) are the most common nationalities.

Employees and self-employed persons

Number of first-time applications granted in 2022 – the five most common nationalities

Country	Female	Male	Total
Thailand	999	6 051	7 050
India	1 079	3 967	5 046
Turkey	193	795	988
China	260	592	852
Ukraine	191	640	831
Other	2 525	6 987	9 512
Total	5 247	19 032	24 279



Legal and practical developments

An inquiry to investigate how to improve the labour market was appointed in 2020. The inquiry had a broad remit with several different questions to consider and reviewed the Swedish labour system. The purpose with the inquiry has been to attract international skills as well as prevent abuses of the system. On 1 June 2022, a number of legislative changes based on proposals from the inquiry entered into force. These changes include a maintenance requirement for labour migrants who want to bring their family members. In addition, more control measures were put in place after a work permit has been granted, especially in sectors where abuse is more frequent. A new residence permit for highly skilled third country nationals who wish to come to Sweden to look for employment was also introduced.¹⁸

The new rules give the Swedish Migration Agency more tools to continue to promote labour immigration that meet companies needs for competence and prevents people who are at risk of being exploited by unscrupulous employers. The purpose of the changes now being introduced is as mentioned above to counteract the exploitation of labour and to attract and retain international competence.

Foreign born women

A priority for the Swedish government is to bring more foreign born women into work. On 24 May 2022, the Swedish Government tasked the Swedish Public Employment Service (PES) to increase the entry of foreign born women into the labour market. The authority is together with the Swedish Gender Equality Agency, the Swedish Migration Agency and a number of other authorities commissioned to present a plan how to break-up segregation and to enhance gender equality¹⁹.

4.2 International students and visiting researchers

Third-country national students

Immigration to Sweden for study purposes has increased over the past ten years, until 2020, when the Covid-19 pandemic caused a decrease and 10 869 first residence permits were granted, a decrease by almost one third (31%). In 2021 there was an increase again to 14 034 permits granted.

Among those individuals that were granted a first permit in 2022 a majority were admitted as students at universities and university colleges (8 333) or as doctoral students 746. In total 14 537 individuals were granted a first permit in 2022. In

¹⁸ Prop. 2021/22:134, bet. 2021/22:SfU22, rskr. 2021/22:238.

¹⁹ [OECD studerar utrikes födda kvinnors etablering på arbetsmarknaden - Regeringen.se](https://www.regeringen.se/pressmeddelanden/2022/05/202205201000001)

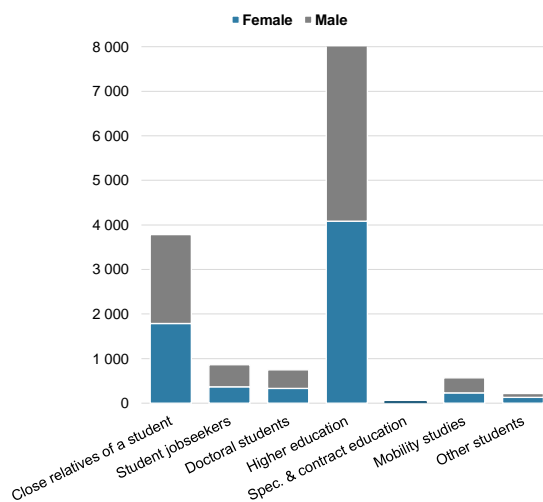
this number you will also find relatives to students and students who are looking for a job.

Figure 5: Visiting Students, number of first-time applicants granted in 2022.

Visiting students

Number of first-time applications granted in 2022

Type of case	Female	Male	Total
Close relatives of a student	1 789	1 993	3 779
Student jobseekers	369	494	863
Doctoral students	331	415	746
Higher education	4 087	4 246	8 333
Spec. & contract education	14	18	32
Mobility studies	231	339	570
Other students	131	83	214
Total	6 949	7 588	14 537



THE SWEDISH MIGRATION AGENCY'S MISSION AND STATISTICS



Source: Swedish Migration Agency.

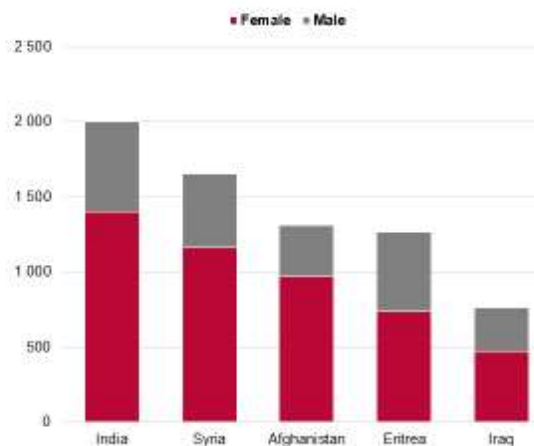
4.3 Family-related immigration

Immigration on the basis of family ties has for many years accounted for a large share of overall immigration flows to Sweden. However, in the last few years immigration for family reasons has decreased. In 2022, 20 999 family-related permits were granted compared to 24 189 in 2021 and 29 468 in 2020. The five most common nationalities in 2022 was India, Syria, Afghanistan, Eritrea and Iraq.

Figure 6. Close family ties, number of first-time applications in 2022**Close family ties**

Number of first-time applications granted in 2022 – the five most common nationalities

Country	Female	Male	Total
India	1 402	600	2 002
Syria	1 165	491	1 656
Afghanistan	972	339	1 311
Eritrea	739	528	1 267
Iraq	478	289	765
Other	8 701	5 297	13 998
Total	13 455	7 544	20 999



THE SWEDISH MIGRATION AGENCY'S MISSION AND STATISTICS

Migrationsverket

Policy and legal developments regarding family-related immigration

Over recent years, Sweden tightened the rules for some categories for family-related migration. In 2010, a financial support requirement was introduced in the Aliens Act as a condition for family reunification, and in 2016, the Parliament adopted a temporary law restricting the possibility of being granted a residence permit for protection purposes in Sweden, and the right to family reunification. It was planned to be in force until 19 July 2019, but was extended until July 2021. The cross-party committee on Sweden's future migration policies proposed, in principle, that Sweden should keep the system that had been applicable under the temporary act after the amendment of this act in 2019 and from July 2021, this law is permanent.

This basically means the same family reunification rights for both refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection. It makes it somewhat easier for Swedish and EU/EEA-nationals to be joined by a spouse or partner from abroad. Regarding financial support requirements, the law demands that the sponsor in Sweden (who wants to be reunited or joined by family members) must not only be able to support him-/herself but also his or her family members.²⁰ Refugees who are granted temporary residence permits and who are deemed to have well-grounded prospects of obtaining a permanent residence permit shall continue to have a right to family reunification with their spouse, cohabitant and/or minor children, and

²⁰ The maintenance requirement will not apply, however, if the sponsor is a child. In addition, family members of beneficiaries of international protection are also exempt from the maintenance requirement if the family member applies for family reunification within three months of the date when the beneficiary of protection obtained his/her residence permit.

children who are refugees shall have a right to reunification with their parents. Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection have the right to family reunification in the same way as refugees.

The law and regulations changes in 2021 had an effect on processing immigration for family reasons and labour related migration at the SMA in 2022 since it is more resource demanding to handle those cases.

According to the political agreement in October 2022 between the new Government and the Sweden Democrats, further restrictions and conditions for family reunification shall be assessed by an inquiry.

4.4 Citizenship and naturalisation

In 2022, the number of people applying for citizenship increased. 87 890 cases were registered and 93 277 cases for Swedish citizenship were decided. The number increased compared to the previous year. 83 % were granted a citizenship.

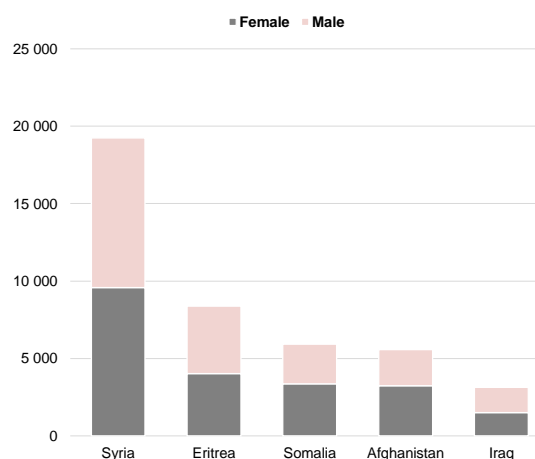
Figure 7 shows the five most common nationalities regarding citizenship application in 2022. For a long period Somalia has been the most common country but from 2017 and onward Syrians have been the largest group. Other common groups in 2022 were Eritrea, Somalia, Afghanistan and Iraq.

Figure 7: Number of Citizenship application granted in 2022

Citizenship

Number of citizenship application cases granted in 2022 – the five most common nationalities

Country	Female	Male	Total
Syria	9 585	9 666	19 251
Eritrea	4 027	4 363	8 390
Somalia	3 363	2 565	5 928
Afghanistan	3 236	2 337	5 573
Iraq	1 493	1 647	3 140
Other	24 398	22 195	46 593
Total	45 203	43 672	88 875



The number of applications for Swedish citizenship has been increasing over recent years. This development is linked to the large number of people who were granted international protection in Sweden after having applied for asylum in 2014 or 2015 as well as subsequent family-related immigration. In 2019, a peak was reached as the Swedish Migration Agency received almost 90 000 applications for Swedish citizenship. In 2020, the trend reversed and the number of applications decreased to approximately 82 600 applications and in 2021 it decreased to approximately 78 000. As the number of incoming applications has considerably exceeded the Agency's capacity to decide on incoming cases, there is a backlog of pending cases, however. The average number of days from application to decision at first instance was 452 days in 2022, compared to 372 days in 2021.

According to the political agreement in October 2022 between the new Government and the Sweden Democrats, a new inquiry shall propose additional conditions to qualify for Swedish citizenship, such as longer habitual residence, and sufficient resources for applicants to support themselves.

4. 5 VISA POLICY AND SCHENGEN CO-OPERATION

In total 94 703 short stay visas were issued during 2022 and 5 185 long stay visas, so called D visas were issued. An increase compared to previous years when short time visas was strongly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Visa Policy

Family members of EEA – citizens have under certain circumstances the right to have necessary visa issued without costs through something called expedited procedure. The government proposed in 2022 in a memorandum a supplemented regulation regarding such visa. The regulation amendment is suggested to enter into force in May 2023.

Schengen borders

The Government decided to prolong border controls at Sweden's international borders from 12 November 2022 to 11 May 2023. The decision is based on the Government's assessment that there is still a serious threat to public order and internal security in Sweden and that there are shortcomings in the control of the external borders around Schengen. In 2015, Sweden reintroduced temporary border controls at its international borders in response to the refugee situation at that time. ²¹

²¹ [Återinförd tillfällig gränskontroll vid inre gräns - Regeringen.se](#)

5 INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

5.1 Asylum applications and decisions

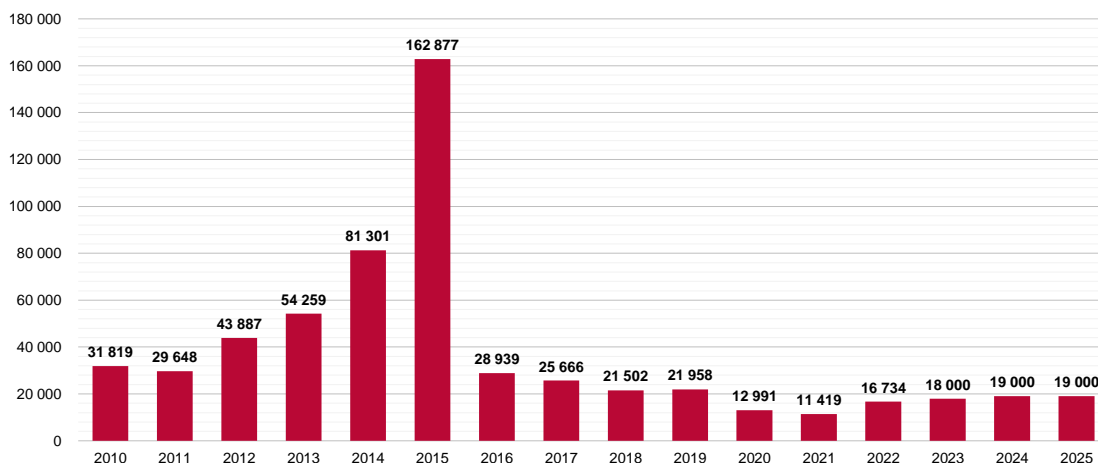
After 2015, when almost 163 000 people applied for asylum in Sweden, the number of new asylum applicants decreased rapidly during subsequent years. In 2020, the numbers fell even more, mainly as a consequence of Covid-19 related travel restrictions. Border closures in Southern, South-Eastern and Central Europe, the agreement between the EU and Türkiye to stop irregular migration flows from Türkiye to Greece, restrictive policy changes in various EU Member States, and attempts to stop irregular migration on the Central Mediterranean route (from Libya to Italy) have certainly contributed to the decrease in the number of asylum seekers. Alongside the Swedish policy changes which, at times, included ID-checks on travellers, temporary intra-Schengen border controls, and measures to make Sweden less attractive as a destination country.

However, in 2022, the number of asylum seekers increased compared to the pandemic years. In 2022, 16 734 applied for asylum (the numbers of TPD applicants are not included) compared to 2021 when 11 412 people applied for asylum in Sweden.

Figure 8: Asylum seekers, 2010-2025, (forecast 2023-2025).

Number of asylum seekers who came to Sweden

2010-2025 (forecast 2023-2025)



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Source: Swedish Migration Agency.

During 2022 most asylum seekers came from Afghanistan, other important national groups were Ukraine, Syria, Iraq, Uzbekistan, Iran and Colombia. The

number of applicants from Peru, Colombia, Ukraine, Russia and Uzbekistan increased in 2022.

Figure 9: Asylum seekers, main nationality groups, 2022



Source: Swedish Migration Agency.

In Sweden approximately 52 000 people applied according to the TPD in 2022.

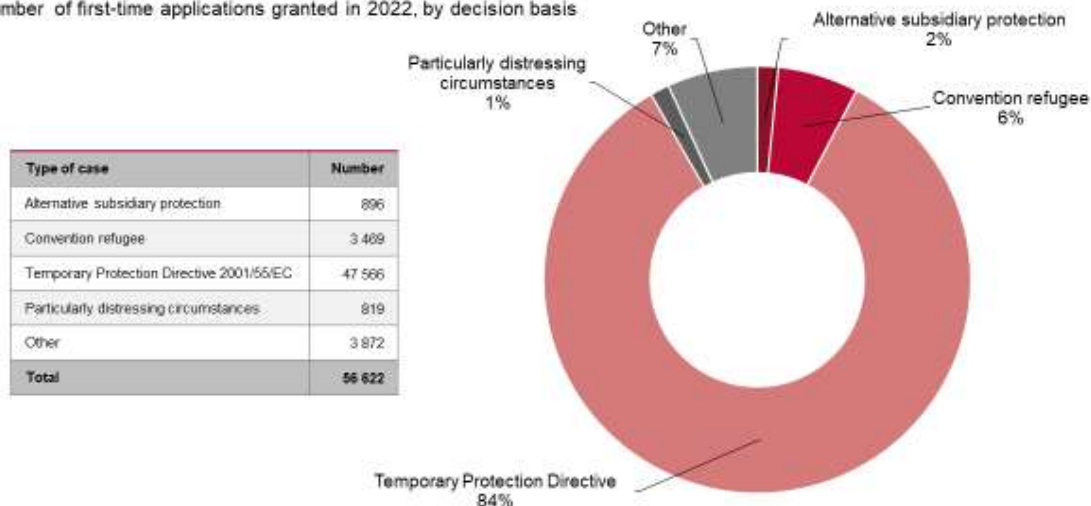
Protection status granted

In 2022, the Swedish Migration Agency granted 9 056 first-time applications. 3 469 were convention refugees, 896 received subsidiary protection, 3 739 were resettled refugees, 819 with exceptionally distressing circumstances. More than in 2021 but far less compare to 2020 when the number of first instance decision on new asylum cases were 20 980.

47 566 received temporary protection. In total 56 622 persons was granted a first-time permits in 2022. See figure 10

Figure 10. Number of first-time applications granted in 2022**Protection**

Number of first-time applications granted in 2022, by decision basis



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The backlog of pending cases at the end of 2022 was 6 859, a slight increase from 2021 but far better than 2020. The average length of process time for handling cases further decreased from 256 days in 2021 to 166 days in 2022. In 2022, the total number of forwarded asylum cases to the Migration Courts was 7 855.

Currently, convention refugees are granted a three-year residence permit with the right to family reunification. Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection are granted an initial period of 13 months temporary residence permit with the same right to family reunification as refugees.

The new Government announced in October 2022 its intention to abolish the concept of permanent residence permits. According to the agreement (Tidö agreement) between the Government and the Sweden Democrats, the migration legislation will be subject to comprehensive changes. The orientation in the agreement is to adjust the Swedish migration law to a minimum level according to the EU law.

Safe countries of origin

In December 2020, the Government submitted a legislative proposal to Parliament regarding the safe country of origin concept. According to the proposal, the Swedish Migration Agency will be authorized to decide on a list of safe countries of origin.

The new legislation entered into force in 2021, which means that in Sweden the EU rules of so-called "safe countries of origin" are applied. In order for a country to be assessed as a safe country of origin, several criteria need to be met. When an assessment is made of whether a country can be considered safe, the

Swedish Migration Agency conducts an overall assessment of the country. Among other things,

- whether there are armed conflicts
- whether there is the occurrence of persecution or torture
- how basic freedoms and rights are applied.

According to the Swedish Migration Agency, the following countries of origin are to be considered as safe countries of origin, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chile, Georgia, Kosovo, Mongolia, North Macedonia and Serbia. If a person comes from any of these countries, the Swedish Migration Agency will assume that he or she can be protected by the authorities in their country of origin. In June 2022, the list of safe countries of origin was updated. Ukraine was removed from the list to clarify that for the time being it is not possible for Ukrainian to return.

The new government states in the agreement (Tidö agreement) that a review will be made of the existing regulations on safe countries of origin to allow for adding to the list countries where parts of the country can be considered safe. The government also considers shifting responsibility for the list of safe countries from the Swedish Migration Agency to the Government Offices.

Digitalisation of the procedure in relation to operational aspects of the asylum procedure in 2022.

In order to increase the efficiency of the asylum procedure, an expansion of the digital solution for handing over appeals to the Migration courts has been put into place. It is now possible to hand over appealed cases to the court digitally in a larger number of different cases.

Furthermore, a digitalisation of the process for application, settlement and request for coordination number regarding those granted temporary protection through TPD has taken place during 2022. This gives the SMA a possibility to handle large caseloads in short amounts of time. The intention is to increase efficiency and contribute to a more sustainable work environment.

The SMA also developed online tools for applying for temporary Protection, both for first-time applicants and for those applying for extensions ²².

To increase the cost-efficiency and streamlining administrative duties a digitalisation of booking and invoicing regarding interpreters have been launched. As well as digitalisation of LMA-cards (identification for asylum seekers) including a QR-code for validity period, development of the case-handling system Skapa which gave both a technical lift and increased usability and digitalisation of the journal system for detention centres.

²² [Ansök om skydd för första gången - Migrationsverket](#)

Changes to the Swedish reception system

Whether or not asylum seekers should be allowed to arrange their own accommodation and stay with family members or friends has been debated in Sweden. On 1 January 2020, new regulations regarding the reception system entered into force. The new rules aimed to prevent asylum seekers from moving to areas with socio-economic challenges. As some areas in Sweden have experienced severe socio-economic challenges, such as high unemployment and crime, the government intended to limit the inflow of migrants and asylum seekers to such areas. With the new rules, asylum seekers who move to such areas can lose their right to daily allowances. In July 2022, new regulations entered into force²³ regarding the municipality's responsibility to arrange accommodation. The purpose of the regulations is to attain an equivalent distribution of accommodation within Sweden's municipalities. Together with the new regulations the parliament made an announcement to the government that an asylum seeker, when it is possible, should not be moved from the municipality where they have established themselves.

In 2022, the Minister of Migration received an interim report regarding reception of asylum seekers during their stay in Sweden. The report suggests among other things that the asylum seekers except unaccompanied minors should stay in government housing as well as participate in integration program during the asylum process. To receive daily allowance and a work permit the requirement is to stay in a government housing. The change in law is suggested to enter into force in April 2024.²⁴

Dublin procedures

During 2022, the Migration Agency issued 2 072 outgoing or "take charge" requests to other Member states, compared to 2 148 in 2021. 697 were not accepted.

At the same time, Sweden received 3 747 incoming requests from other Member States, 1 136 were not accepted. The number of Dublin requests coming in to Sweden from other Member States increased in 2022. While requests from others states decreased with 11 %.

A total of 590 Dublin transfers were carried out to another Dublin Country in 2022. The average processing time for all Dublin cases in 2022 i.e. until a transfer decision was issued, was 64 days.

²³ (2022:1008)

²⁴ [Asylsökande ska bo i statliga boenden och delta i samhällsintroduktion - Regeringen.se](https://www.regeringen.se/491000/2022/07/14/asylsokande-ska-bo-i-statliga-boenden-och-delta-i-samhallsintroduktion)

With a view to increase the efficiency of the asylum procedure, a new legal position paper on assessment of transfers to Hungary according to the Dublin Regulation (RS/010/2022),²⁵ was published by SMA. The SMA currently does not consider that such systemic deficiencies in the asylum procedure and reception conditions in Hungary exist that transfers would engage Article 3(2) of the Dublin Regulation. The Migration Agency however considers that there are serious doubts on whether an asylum seeker, after transfer to Hungary, can gain access to the asylum procedure. Therefore, the SMA assesses that no transfers to Hungary can be done until further notice. Even if transfer to Hungary should not be carried out, the Swedish Migration Agency shall continue to establish if Hungary is the responsible Member State in accordance with the Dublin Regulation.

5.2 Resettlement

Apart from being a destination country for persons seeking asylum, Sweden also engages in global resettlement efforts. Following a cross-party agreement of 2015, Sweden has gradually increased the number of places in its resettlement programme. While approximately 1 900 spots were available in 2016 and earlier, the annual quota was raised to 3 400 for 2017, and to 5 000 persons in 2018. From 2018 the quota has been 5 000. Contrary to beneficiaries of international protection who come to Sweden as asylum seekers, resettled refugees are still granted permanent residence permits.

Resettlement is regulated by the Aliens Act in which specific criteria are mentioned. The Act serves as the legal base for resettlement selection and procedures. An annual spending authorisation from the Swedish Parliament and an annual Government decision for the responsible authority, the Swedish Migration Agency, regulate the operation of the programme. The Migration Agency decides on the allocation of the places within the resettlement quota in consultation with UNHCR and after consultation with the Ministry of Justice.

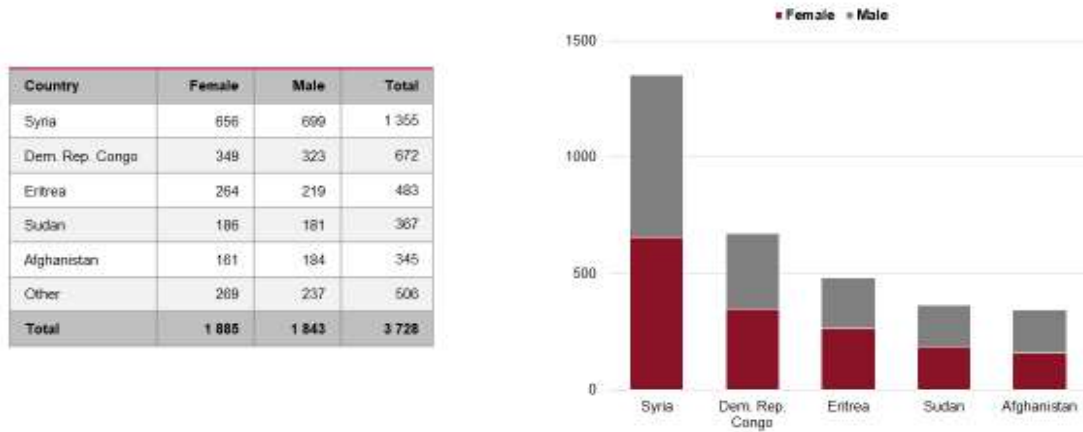
The resettlement programme consists essentially of two streams: dossier processing and selection missions. Residence permits are granted to persons classified as refugees under the Aliens Act or as persons in need of subsidiary protection. Sweden resettles upon request from the UNHCR, and – in exceptional cases – from a Swedish embassy.

The Swedish quota for resettlement of refugees from third countries remained in 2022, comprising 5 000 persons. 5 004 were resettled during 2022. 3 728 persons were granted residence permit. In cooperation with International Organization for Migration (IOM) 2 992 civic information courses were carried out. 80 % had the opportunity to participate in those courses.

²⁵ [Dokument - Lifos extern \(migrationsverket.se\)](#)

Figure 11. Resettlement in 2022**Quota refugees**

The five most common nationalities in quota selection to Sweden in 2022



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27 October 2022, the new government tasked the Swedish Migration Agency to plan for a reduced number of refugees to be resettled from 5000 per year to 900 per year in 2023 and 2024.

6 INTEGRATION OF PERSONS WHO ARE GRANTED PROTECTION

Numerical trends

In 2022, 6 500 newly arrived and resettled refugees were assigned to accommodation provided by the SMA (accommodation centre) and 6 600 persons who were granted a residence permit left the reception system for asylum seekers and were settled in a Swedish municipalities. The figure includes asylum seekers that were granted international protection or residence permits for other (e.g., humanitarian) reasons, persons that were taken to Sweden under the Swedish resettlement programme, and family members of beneficiaries of international protection.

This figure is lower than the corresponding figures in earlier years. The decrease is mainly the result of a significantly lower inflow of asylum seekers to Sweden, which has resulted in fewer granted residence permits. Another reason is that approximately 600 places in the Swedish resettlement programme that were plan to be allocated in November and December 2022 were stopped since the new government plan to reduce the number of refugees to be resettled in 2023.

During 2022 1 372 unaccompanied children left the reception system and were settled in the Swedish municipality. Of those were 817 Ukrainians. Furthermore 91 unaccompanied children were resettled in a Swedish municipality within the resettlement programme.

Labour market and skills

The Swedish association of Local Authorities and Regions (SKR) was tasked in 2018 to investigate to what extent nursery school can shorten the labour market integration and further integrate foreign born women into the Swedish society. Nursery school is available for both parents and children even if they are not enrolled in the labour market. In 2022, SKR gave priority to measures that specifically targeted or facilitated the participation of third-country nationals on parental leave. Special priority was given to measures aimed to support Swedish language learning.²⁶

The Swedish Government also tasked the Swedish Public Employment Service to increase the entry of foreign born women into the labour market. The authority is together with the Swedish Gender Equality Agency, the Swedish Migration Agency and a number of other authorities commissioned to present a plan how to break-up segregation and to enhance gender equality. The deadline for the assignment is 31 of May 2023. The government furthermore decided to grant OECD 90 000 euros for a study about how foreign born women's parenthood can affect their establishment in the labour market.²⁷

²⁶ [Regeringen.se](https://www.regeringen.se).

²⁷ [OECD studerar utrikes födda kvinnors etablering på arbetsmarknaden - Regeringen.se](https://www.regeringen.se)

Basic services

In the budget bill for 2022 the Government proposed increased funding to civil society and municipalities for early measures for asylum seekers and others with SEK 30 million for 2022 with the aim of ensuring access to civic information and health promotion activities for asylum seekers ²⁸.

The Swedish Migration Agency was assigned by the Government to provide information to all asylum seekers starting from 1 October 2021. This so called community introduction program entails highlighting important issues related to democracy, rights, obligations and opportunities in society. From January 2022, there are five cities in Sweden offering the program, Malmö, Göteborg, Norrköping, Sundbyberg and Boden.

Active participation of migrants and receiving societies in integration

Since 2015, study associations and folk high schools within the adult education have received government grants for basic language courses within the initiative "Swedish from day one". The courses are offered to asylum seekers and individuals with a residence permit who are staying in the Migration Agency's accommodation facilities. Since July 2022, these courses are also available to individuals who have been granted a temporary residence permit under the EU Temporary Protection Directive. The aim is faster integration process and to increase language skills. During 2022, the government grant to this initiative was increased with 50 millions SEK 2022 due to the war in Ukraine (110 millions SEK in total).

Fighting racism and discrimination.

In June 2022, the Swedish Government adopted five action programmes against various forms of racism; Afrophobia, antisemitism, antiziganism, Islamophobia and racism against the Sami people. For example, they include measures in the field of education, continued and enhanced efforts by the police to counter racism and hate crime and an assignment to the Swedish Defence Research Agency to monitor violent extremism and racism in digital environments. The action programmes aim at increasing the knowledge of and at combating racism and include a variety of measures during 2022-2024.²⁹

²⁸ [Utgiftsområde 13 Jämställdhet och nyanlända invandranes etablering \(regeringen.se\)](#)

²⁹ [Åtgärdsprogram mot afrofobi - Regeringen.se](#)
[Åtgärdsprogram mot islamofobi - Regeringen.se](#)
[Åtgärdsprogram mot antisemitism - Regeringen.se](#)
[Åtgärdsprogram mot rasism mot samer - Regeringen.se](#)

Covid-19 pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic continued to increase the need for civil society efforts for society's most vulnerable groups, such as homeless people, including migrants in vulnerable positions. In order to strengthen civil society's opportunities to make efforts for vulnerable groups due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Government set aside funds also in 2022. The Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society was responsible for distributing the grants. In order to strengthen civil society's opportunities to make efforts for vulnerable groups due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

New Minister of Integration

When the new government took office in Sweden in October a new Minister of Integration came to place. The minister for Employment and Integration is Johan Pehrson. The Ministry of Employment is responsible for labour but also matters concerning integration. The significant change is that Sweden has not had a minister of integration since 2014. The aim of integration policy is equal rights, obligations and opportunities for all, regardless of ethnic or cultural background. This includes creating better conditions for newly arrived migrants in working life and society.

In November 2022, a number of measures were presented in the Budget Bill for 2023 for improved integration. Some of the measures that are planned to ensure that residents, in poorer areas, are included in the Swedish society are: investments in the sport sector, promotion of health, prevention of work among children and young people, increased opportunities for women and girls, measures against honour crimes and repression. ³⁰

³⁰ [UO13 \(regeringen.se\)](https://www.regeringen.se/491319)

7 UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

Numerical trends

Minors who come to Sweden without a guardian and seek asylum usually live in a municipal group home or in youth housing, if they do not have relatives in Sweden with whom they can live. The municipalities are responsible for receiving unaccompanied minors. Among other things, this means that the municipality must appoint a representative who can act in the parents' place. The law also requires that a legal council is being appointed promptly. The SMA is responsible to appoint a legal council to help the child/adolescent with their asylum application.

After 2015, when more than 35 000 unaccompanied minors (UAM) applied for asylum in Sweden, the number of UAM decreased strongly until 2022 when the number increased again. As shown in figure 12, 623 unaccompanied minors and young people applied for asylum in Sweden. 762 sought protection under the TPD. In 2022, 61 persons were considered as adults following an medical age assessment procedure.

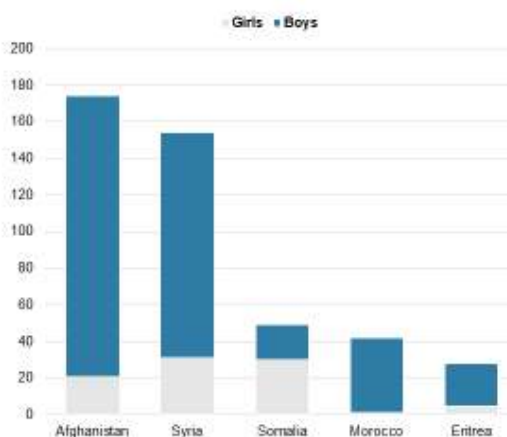
Figure. 12 Unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors 2022

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors

Number of applications received in 2022 – the five most common nationalities, unique individuals

Country	Girls	Boys	Total
Afghanistan	21	153	174
Syria	31	123	154
Somalia	30	19	49
Morocco	1	41	42
Eritrea	5	23	28
Other	53	123	176
Total	141	482	623

762 individuals applied under the Temporary Protection Directive – 384 girls and 378 boys



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Source: Swedish Migration Agency.

Countries of origin and protection rate

In 2022, Afghanistan was as in 2016 and 2017 the dominating country of origin of unaccompanied minors arriving in Sweden. Syria constituted the second largest nationality group.

Reception and accommodation of unaccompanied minors

The Swedish government has commissioned the National Board of Health and Welfare, the Swedish Migration Agency and the Swedish Police Authority to jointly carry out a three-year development work regarding the problem of unaccompanied children who disappear. The purpose is to raise the knowledge in the field and to develop coordinated and long-term sustainable working methods that prevent children from disappearing.

The National Board of Forensic Medicine conducts medical age assessments in asylum cases. The methods used for age assessments have been criticised by the medical community, including by the experts obliged to carry out the tests. The criticism is about the reliability of the method uses and the weight the age assessment carries in the decision of the SMA.

After criticism by the Swedish Council on Medical Ethics, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human rights and NGOs and lawyers, the government decided in April 2019 that a commission of inquiry would be set up. The commission of inquiry should assess the situation through an independent review and the deadline to submit its final findings is 31 May 2024.

Moreover, in 2022, the method description for the National Board of Forensic Medicine's medical age assessments was updated containing a more comprehensive account of uncertainties and factors affecting the model. This means no changes in how the medical age assessment is conducted or in how the result is assessed or reported. However, the updated method description provides a more detailed and transparent description of the margin of errors, factors affecting the statistical model and what is done to minimize the risks.

Integration of minors

To increase the integration of third country national minors a proposition from the government proposed that every municipality should be obliged to contact caregiver to a minor that have the right to attend preschool for those who have lived in Sweden for a shorter period. The purpose is to give information about the right of the minor to attend preschool and the purpose of preschool. The change in law is proposed to be applied first of July 2023.

8 TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

Numerical trends regarding trafficking in human beings

Seen over several years, trafficking in human beings seems to be a growing phenomenon in Sweden, although rising numbers of suspected cases can also be a result of increased awareness and resources made available to and by competent authorities.

In 2022, the Migration Agency identified 515 persons as potential victims of trafficking. Among these, 211 were women and 283 were men. 22 persons were under the age of 18. The potential victims were mainly from Thailand (173), Uganda (75) Ukraine (45) Kenya (29), Vietnam (16), Mongolia (12) and Afghanistan (12).

In 2021 the Migration Agency identified 261 persons as potential victims of trafficking. The reason behind the extensive increase in 2022 is labour exploitation with 170 identified cases and 86 cases regarding labour applications from abroad where there was suspicion of exploitation.

Labour exploitation was the most frequent form of exploitation found among the cases identified in 2022. The second most common type of exploitation was sexual exploitation, with 99 cases.

The Migration Agency also processes cases in which the person in charge of a preliminary criminal investigation applies for temporary residence permits for suspected victims or witnesses of crimes. This includes human trafficking victims that cooperate with law enforcement authorities. In 2022, the Agency issued 113 such permits in relation to potential victims of human trafficking. In addition to these, 23 so-called "reflection periods", a type of short-term permits, were granted.

The development in the work against human trafficking and exploitation

A large part of the Migration Agency's work against human trafficking and exploitation during the year focused on the situation in Ukraine. An information sheet in Ukrainian, Russian and English produced by the Swedish Gender Equality Agency was distributed and displayed at the Migration Agency's application units, accommodation and service centres. In addition to the methodological support and procedures that already exist, the Migration Agency's staff were also able to take part in the Swedish Gender Equality Agency's support for professionals, and have been urged to pay extra attention to indications of human trafficking and exploitation in the examination of cases and meetings with applicants.

During the autumn of 2022, a major training effort was initiated for all administrative staff at all of the authority's detention centres. The training aimed to increase the ability to identify suspected victims and safeguard their rights,

regardless of whether the Migration Agency or the Police Authority has made the decision on detention. In addition, new procedures, a screening list and a protocol to be used in cases of suspicion of human trafficking have been developed.³¹

³¹ Migration Agency, Annual Report 2022, Dnr: 1.3.2-2023-2262, available in Swedish at: <http://bitly.ws/AUE8>

9 RETURN AND READMISSION

Numerical trends

In 2022, 11 580 return cases were registered. 3 723 left the country according to decision and to the country specified in the decision. Of all voluntary returns during 2022 Iraq, Uzbekistan, Albania, Russia and Ukraine were the most common countries. Due to the decreased number of people applying for asylum the last couple of years, fewer return cases were registered in 2022 compared to last year. During 2020, 18 523 cases were registered and in 2021, 13 782 return cases were registered.

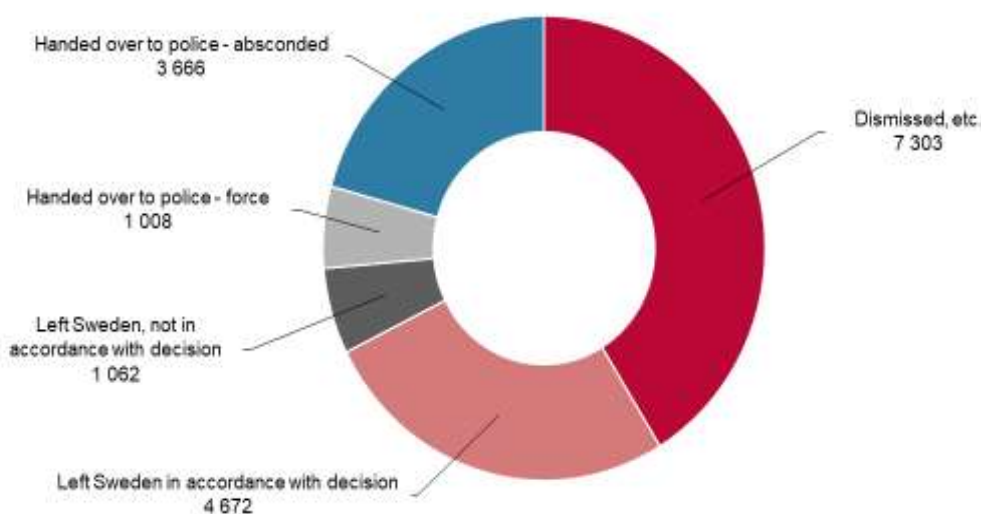
The number of return cases who received a decision to refuse entry or expulsion order also decreased. However, return cases registered according to a decision of refusal of entry with immediate effect increased due to the list of safe countries of origin that entered into force in May 2021 and was applicable during the whole year of 2022.

Cases that were written of, often persons with a temporary residence permit with a decision of expulsion order that has been repealed, increased compared to last year.

Voluntary and forced returns

Figure 13: Closed returnee cases in 2022

Closed returnee cases in 2022



The table above does not include transfers under the Dublin Regulation: these are not designated as returns. The Swedish Migration Agency opens a return case when a decision to refuse entry or an expulsion order (return decision) enters into legal force or otherwise becomes enforceable. This applies both to people who have applied for international protection (asylum) in Sweden and those who have had their application for a residence permit on another ground (studies/work, etc.) rejected.

The figure for “dismissed, etc.” “cases that have been written off” is largely explained by the fact that many return decisions were statute-barred in 2022, which is due to the large number of applicants in 2015/2016 who received a decision in 2018 (a return decision is valid for four years). Due to this SMA has during several years had a back-log of pending asylum cases until now. It may be noted that a return case can remain dormant for a long time if the individual has a temporary residence permit at the same time as the return decision applies.

Main national developments in the field of return.

Return and reintegration are considered essential elements to achieve an orderly migration management for the government. This requires that third-country nationals with return decisions leave the country in accordance with the decision. The Covid-19 pandemic had a major impact on both voluntary and forced return as well as the war in Ukraine.

The Swedish government instructed, in the Appropriation directions for 2022, the Swedish Migration Agency to intensify their work to significantly increase returns. The aim is to improve the efficiency of the return procedure and work towards more sustainable return and reintegration. In September 2022, the SMA presented the result of a strategy to develop the work on return such as competence-enhancing efforts for case officers and to increase the knowledge about how to get support when returning. One example is education in methodology in interviewing that has been developed in an EU-project called Capacity Development and Training for Return Counsellors (CADRE). CADRE will in the long run create several education opportunities in the work of return for case officers at the SMA.

In 2022 four countries were added to the list who is eligible to the reestablishment support, Armenia, Bangladesh, Egypt, Mongolia. The purpose with the reestablishment support is to increase return of third country nationals to countries where the conditions are considered extra harsh and increase return to countries that are difficult to motivate a voluntary return.

In the Appropriation direction for 2022, the Swedish government also instructed the Swedish Migration Agency to increase the number of detention places. In April, the SMA presented a plan to increase detention places together with an analysis of the need of detention places over time. In 2022 the total capacity of detention centres was 567 and there were six available centres. During the year steps were

taken to develop the capacity of detention with the opening of a new detention in the city of Mölndal. The work to expand the amount of detention places also continued during the year. If the work proceed as planned the capacity of the detentions centres will increase by 50 during 2024.

The government also gave the SMA the task to examine how the authority could introduce accommodation centres for those who have a return decision, unaccompanied children not included. The SMA presented the assignment to the Ministry of Justice in January 2023.³²

Furthermore, to make the work on return more efficient and in order to strengthen the work of return the government appointed a person to review the regulatory framework and suggest actions. The researcher is tasked, among other things, to

- decide if The Police Authority and the Swedish Security Service are in need of further authorities when it comes to the work on return.
- decide if the prescription period for decision of removal shall be extended.
- decide if the SMA shall extend the work to store and search for biometrics.

The deadline for the assignment is the 31 of October 2023.³³

Cooperation with third countries of origin and transit on return and reintegration management

In 2018, the Migration Agency became a partner in the European Return and Reintegration Network (ERRIN). The programme aimed to strengthen, facilitate and streamline the return procedures in the EU through common initiatives, and to promote a durable and efficient reintegration in countries outside the EU. The programme has also developed tools to make the work of return more efficient. The programme ended in 2022.

Reintegration Assistance Tool

To increased return of third country nationals and provide for their improved possibilities to reintegrate ERRIN became in April 2022 Joint Reintegration Services (JRS). JRS is administrated by Frontex. Frontex JRS offers re-establishment support to help those who return to a country where there are limited opportunities for re-establishment and Frontex provides reintegration assistance as part of its Reintegration programme.

To ensure proper administrative case handling, Frontex will use the Reintegration Assistance Tool (RIAT) developed by the commission. This online tool simplifies and standardises the exchange of information about the reintegration process to

³² [Uppdrag om införande av återvändandecenter - Regeringen.se](#)

³³ [Åtgärder för att stärka återvändandeverksamheten – regeringen.se](#)

the best benefit of returnees, reintegration partners and return counsellors. In 2022, when ERRIN ended the SMA joined RIAT.

Reintegration support

In order to facilitate return and to strengthen the incentives for voluntary return, reintegration support can be granted to persons who have received a final decision or withdrawn their application and choose to return voluntarily to a country with very limited opportunities for re-establishment. In 2022, 147 persons were granted re-integration support provided by the Swedish Migration Agency. 247 people received support with re-establishment. However, the number of grants was lower than previous years.

10 MIGRATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

New developments aimed at facilitating synergies between migration and development in third countries.

The political platform for the new Swedish government included a new focus on the linkages between migration and development. The platform emphasized, inter alia, the need to address the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement and to promote cooperation on return and readmission.

Return, reintegration and irregular migration are prioritised areas in the external dimension of migration, including in the context of EU development cooperation. Swedish aid also focuses on effective measures to reduce the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement, e.g. through job creation or climate adaptation. Sweden intends to make parts of the aid conditional in order to ensure that recipient countries take responsibility for their citizens in matters relating to return and readmission. Sweden will continue to support an effective and purposive implementation of migration related activities in the context of EU development cooperation, in line with objectives set out in Global Europe, the New Pact on Migration and Asylum and conclusions adopted by the European Council.

Irregular migration caused by lack of development, unemployment, conflict etc. development cooperation has an important role to play when it comes to rebuilding societies affected by war and conflict, which can create increased opportunities and better conditions for a person to return or voluntarily repatriate, and avoid new irregular migratory flows. In 2022, a new strategy for Sweden's development cooperation with Iraq and Africa, with a specific migration objective took place. The strategy specifies that Sida (The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) should contribute to "Sustainable solutions for refugees, internally displaced persons and host communities, and strengthened conditions for safe, orderly and regular migration, including return and reintegration in a way that contributes to development."
